

STANDARD FORM NO. 64

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Chief, FBIS

DATE: 17 March 1955

FROM : Chief, London Bureau

SUBJECT: Meeting of the Joint BBC-FBIS Standardization Committee

REF : Letter from Chief, FBIS dated 17 August 1954, subject: Principles of Monitoring

1. As suggested in the letter under reference copies of the attached document "Principles of Monitoring" with "Appendix: FBIS Coverage and Procedural Requirements" were handed to the unit heads of the BBC for comment and eventual discussion at a meeting of the Joint Standardization Committee.

2. The BBC requested postponement of a meeting pending appointment of a new Head of the Reception Unit and a further lapse of time to permit the new Head to familiarize himself with the problems of his unit.

3. The meeting was held on 1 March 1955, the record of which is attached in two copies.

4. The FBIS documents formed the basis of discussion, which followed the paragraphed outline of the documents. This was followed by a discussion of certain BBC procedural practices on which FBIS sought clarification and standardization.

5. Although the conclusions reached were informal and tentative in nature, the discussion produced several useful agreements in principle. Meetings on a working level have been arranged between the Chief Editor and Chief Analyst of the London Bureau and the Head, BBC Reception Unit and others on specific problems. These will be followed at a later date by another formal meeting of the Standardization Committee, when concrete proposals have been reached and the BBC situation for the coming fiscal year has been clarified.

Attachment

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RECORD OF FOURTH MEETING OF THE JOINT BBC-FBIS

STANDARDISATION COMMITTEE

1st March 1955

Present: Mr. C.J. Saltmarsh, H.R.M.S. (in the Chair)
Mr. C.H. Landon, H.N.B.M.S.
Mr. A.R. Addington, H.R.U.M.S.
[redacted] Chief, London Bureau FBIS
[redacted] Assistant Chief, London Bureau FBIS
[redacted] Chief Analyst, London Bureau FBIS

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PRINCIPLES OF MONITORING

Before the discussion outlined below on the document and Appendix tabled by FBIS, the BBC stated that, pending clarification of their budgetary situation, which was also to be discussed at the joint FBIS-BBC Coordination Committee meeting in Washington, discussion on the document must on their side necessarily be of an informal nature. It was agreed that the document should be discussed accordingly and that the views expressed could at some later date usefully form the basis of an agreed statement of principles.

I. Objectives and Responsibilities

A. Collection

1. Agreed.
2. It was agreed that the phrase "in the nature of" was unnecessary and that the statement might read as follows: "The monitoring operation constitutes a service to consumers."
3. The BBC felt that the concept of a schedule which was "rigorously adhered to" to a certain extent contradicted the statement in Para. 4 on maintenance of "sufficient flexibility". Although FBIS thought the paragraphs were not in essential conflict, it was suggested that they might be modified and combined. It was agreed that an attempt would be made to find a mutually acceptable wording.
4. See Para. 3.

B. Processing

1. The BBC stated that for financial reasons it would not be possible to agree to record "all coverage", but agreed to prepare a general statement of the types of coverage which might not always be recorded.

The BBC noted for the record that "certain recordings" selected for permanent retention by FBIS had been turned over to FBIS for storage or forwarding to Washington.

2. Agreed
3. It was agreed that the BBC would provide FBIS with a list of its standardised logographs.

C. Dissemination

1. Agreed.

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II. Procedures and Techniques

- A. The references to "all coverage" in Section I B Para. 1 apply equally to this paragraph. It was agreed that the multiple recording of major speeches and statements was a good safeguard. The BBC observed, however, that it would be difficult to make this a firm requirement for all major material since single recordings are occasionally in progress before their import is realised. It was further agreed that certain transmitters had only one good frequency and that it would therefore seem unnecessary in these cases to require recording from more than one frequency.
- B. The BBC did not concur with this paragraph. Except for Moscow broadcasts, "Topical indicators" or "slugs" are not normally prepared for each item on all broadcasts. Further, they are not usually prepared while the broadcasts are in progress, nor do they necessarily serve as a basis for selection, since it is the monitor who normally makes the selection. The statement in this paragraph reflects the monitoring methods of FBIS and no change to these methods is at present contemplated by the BBC.
- C. A monitor's summary will:

Since the BBC monitoring system differs in many respects from that of FBIS, it was not possible for the BBC to agree with any of the paragraphs under this heading, except insofar as they may be a statement of BBC practices.
- D. It was suggested and agreed that this paragraph should read as follows: "Consistency and precision is required in the translation of all monitored material." It was pointed out that if a change were really "innocuous" it could hardly be of "fundamental significance."
- E. Agreed.
- F. Agreed. The BBC suggested "consumers" be changed to "authorised consumers".

APPENDIX: FBIS COVERAGE AND PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Communist Transmitters; paras. 1, 2 and 3

The BBC felt that no specific or percentage coverage commitments could be made at this stage.

4. It was agreed that verbatim texts as specified in 4a and b would be provided for Soviet coverage. It was agreed that verbatim texts as specified in 4c, d and e would be desirable in principle and would be provided within capabilities, but that specific commitments must remain in abeyance.
5. The BBC felt that the requirements of Para. 4 as applied to Para. 5 must also remain in abeyance. It was agreed that in view of the BBC system, the term "editorial judgment" should be replaced by the phrase "the judgment of the selector".
6. Paras. a and b were agreed in principle without specific commitment.
7. Agreed.
8. Agreed.

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B. Non-Communist Transmitters

1. Agreed.
2. Agreed.

CLARIFICATION AND STANDARDISATION OF BBC PRACTICES

A. Methods of Making Textual Corrections to Copy

It was agreed that each Service would supply the other with a statement of its system of making corrections.

B. Methods of Supplying "Adds" to Copy

FBIS stated its editors were under continual difficulty and uncertainty in applying "adds" supplied by the BBC. It was agreed that Head of Reception Unit and the Assistant Chief, London Bureau would confer on standardising procedure.

C. Copy Designations

FBIS pointed out that the term "Summary with Quotations" although not approved by the BBC was in fact often used by monitors. It was agreed that designations would follow the approved list and FBIS requested a copy of this list.

D. "Indirect Speech" Style

FBIS pointed out that certain forms of BBC descriptive reporting were creating difficulty and uncertainty for FBIS editors. This was particularly the case in instances when it was not clear whether the monitor or announcer made certain statements. It was agreed that the Head of Reception Unit and the Assistant Chief, London Bureau would confer on the problem of descriptive reporting.

Distribution:

Chief, London Bureau FBIS (10)
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